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Bread winner

Soon it will be safe to turn on your oven again, so let's make it good. "Focaccia, Simple Breads from the Italian Oven," by Carol Field, will tempt you with Cornmeal Schiacciata with Walnuts, Whole Wheat Focaccia with Olive Paste and Basil-Filled Spiral Focaccia, as well as sweet focaccias. It inspires experimentation, so stock your pantry well. Published by Chronicle Books, it sells for \$15.95.

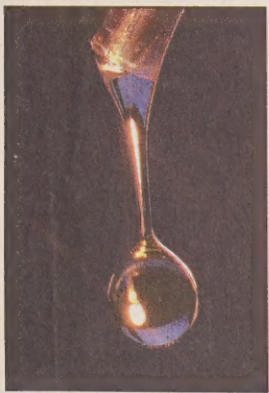


FOOD

SEW SIMPLE:

His-and-hers matching robes would be an easy gift to make for Christmas.

C7



BOB FILA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

It was only a matter of time until the American food industry turned its attention to one of our most common sources of fat: cooking oils.

More oil options to flow

■ *Cooking product latest staple to try to meet the demands of health-conscious consumers*

BY BETSY A. HORNICK
Chicago Tribune

Move over olive oil and canola oil — a new generation of more healthful salad and cooking oils is hitting the shelves. These "designer" oils have joined the surge of so-called functional food products taking the place of traditional foods in the quest for good health — and revenue.

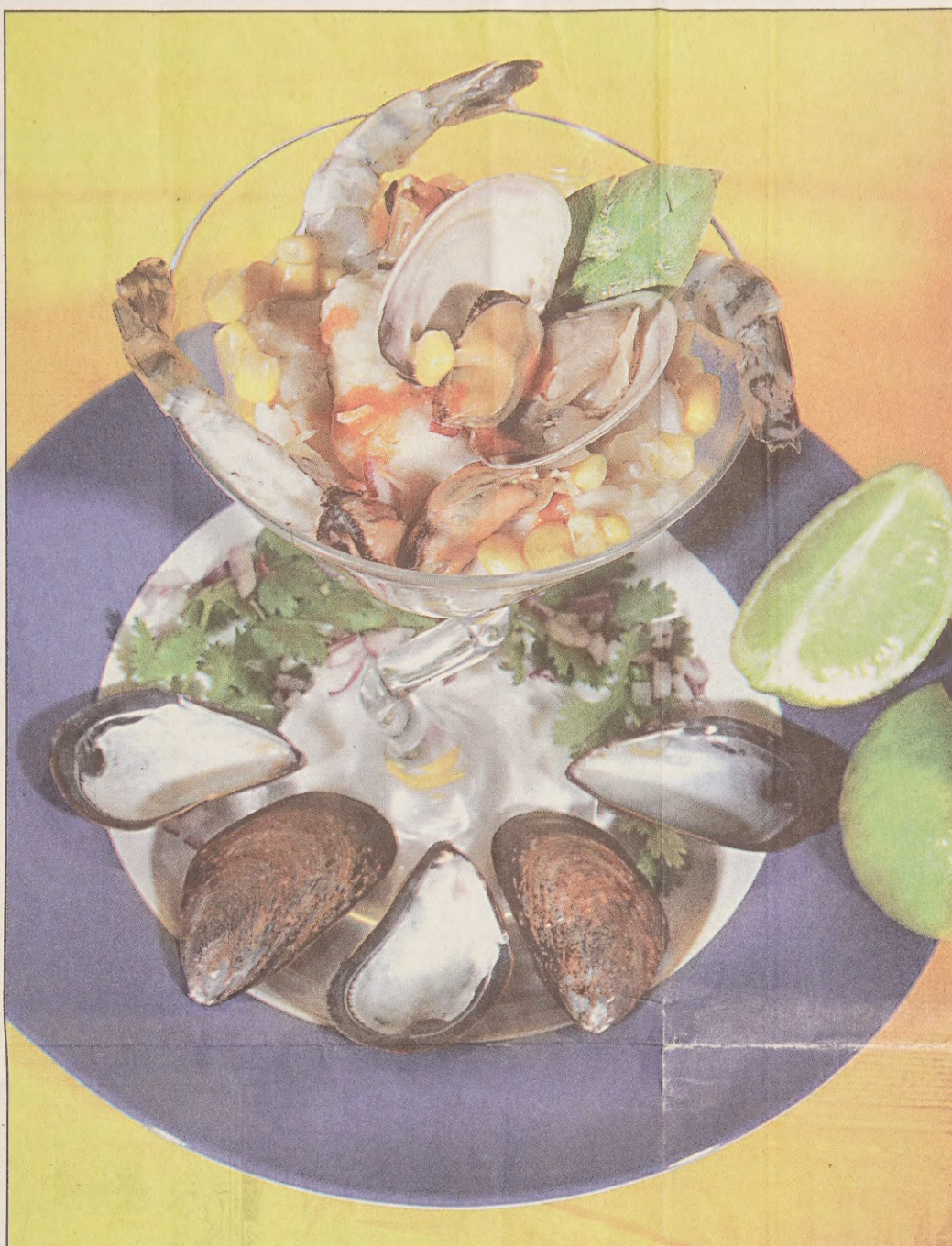
"Oil manufacturers are looking for ways to improve the attractiveness of their products," said Robert Reeves, president of the Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils, an industry organization. "Oils are a dietary staple so they serve as a good medium for introducing health benefits."

Making a product like cooking oil more healthful may sound like a formidable goal, but it is one of the latest categories of food to undergo a redesign to meet the demands of health-conscious consumers.

Diane Quagliani, a dietitian and nutrition consultant based in Western Springs, Ill., put this in perspective. "Products like the more healthful cooking oils are not a magic bullet," Quagliani said. "They only offer benefits when used wisely as part of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle."

Some designer oils are fortified with nutrients, such as vitamin E or beta carotene. Others are reformulated or genetically modified with enhanced nutrient profiles, such as less saturated fat, more omega-3 fat (which has been found to lower blood triglycerides, a risk factor for heart disease) or with

See **DESIGNER** on **PAGE D2**



CHRISTOPHER ALUKA/KNIGHT RIDDER

A marinade of lime and spices "cooks" fish and shellfish, resulting in ceviche.

a RARE treat

Citrus-marinated ceviche adds a splash of spice to table

BY ALLISON ASKINS
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Legend has it that Latin American fishermen so savored their catches, they would squeeze limes over fish caught in the morning and indulge in the flavors by lunch.

Today that dish is known and loved as ceviche. You might also find it spelled

Fish and more

Recipes for the 'in' food
D2

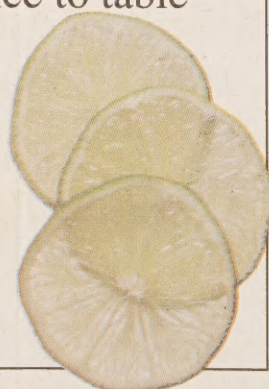
"seviche" or "cebiche."

Basically a seafood salad, ceviche is prepared by cutting fresh pieces of fish and "cooking" them in a marinade of lime and spices. The dish never sees the

flame of a grill or the heat of a stove, though. The citrus juices do all the cooking.

In chic cities such as New York, the dish is delighting diners, much like sushi, in bars known as ceycherias.

Linda Stradley, author of the cookbook "I'll Have What They're Having" (Three Forks Press, 2002), refers to the dish as the "in food" for the beginning of the 21st century.



Great in guacamole, avocados can also be gussied up

BY RUSS PARSONS
Los Angeles Times

The first couple of weeks of avocado season, I was satisfied with something I learned from chef/restaurant Evan Kleiman many years ago: Roughly purée an avocado with a fork, tart it up with some lemon juice, then season it with salt and pepper. Lots of pepper. Black pepper, coarsely ground.

Spread this on a split, toasted focaccia roll and you've got one of the simplest, most delicious summer dishes you can imagine.

It's but a short step from there to soup. Because

avocados are so dense and so flavorful, you need only a blender and some chicken stock to make a quite voluptuous bisque. A little sour dairy, such as yogurt, adds depth of flavor, but don't stir it in until just before you're ready to serve it. An enzyme in the avocado changes the taste of the milk if it sits for long.

As with guacamole, I prefer my avocado soups rather plain (my favorite guac is still the one I learned back in the late '60s from New Mexico magazine: mashed avocado and garlic salt). But that doesn't mean you can't dress them up with garnishes as simple as snipped chives or as fancy as kernels cut from an

ear of grilled corn or goat cheese-chive quenelles — simple to make, but impressively high-fashion.

COLD AVOCADO BISQUE WITH GOAT CHEESE-CHIVE QUENELLES

Total time: 20 minutes, plus at least 1/2 hour chilling time

Servings: 6

3 cloves garlic

2 pounds avocados (3 large), seeded, peeled and coarsely chopped

4 cups chicken stock

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1/4 pound (1/2 cup) fresh goat cheese

2 tablespoons minced chives
1/2 cup yogurt

With the blender running, remove the plastic cap and drop the garlic cloves through the hole in the lid to mince. Turn the machine off and add the chopped avocados.

With the machine running on medium speed, slowly add the chicken stock, pouring through the hole in the lid. Add the salt and turn the speed up to high to make a smooth, velvety purée. (Do in batches if necessary.) Chill until serving time.

While the soup is chilling (one-half hour to 2 hours), beat together the goat cheese and the chives to make a smooth, soft paste.

When ready to serve, whisk yogurt into soup and divide soup evenly into 6 bowls.

Using 2 teaspoons, form the goat cheese into 6 quenelles and place one in the center of each bowl. To form a quenelle, use one spoon to scoop up enough of the goat cheese mixture to fill its bowl. Use the other spoon to scoop the mixture out of the first spoon, turning it over to create a smooth side. Repeat a couple of times until the mixture is an attractive smooth-sided oval. Or, you can just scoop a less-than-perfect spoonful in the center of each bowl.

See **FLAVORFUL** on **PAGE D2**

New Mexico's Own



PATRICIA AARON
For the Journal

Prickly pear's tang is tender

This summer, Patricia Aaron introduces you to some items you might not use regularly. This week: Meet prickly pear cactus.

Prickly pear cactus provides food in two seasons, spring and autumn. In spring the plant produces tender young stems or pads (nopales) with few spines, for nopalitos. Nopalitos can be used raw in salads when silver dollar-size, or peeled, sliced and cooked as a vegetable when larger.

In autumn the yellow flower of the cactus is followed by an abundance of sweet, purple-red fruit the size of a large egg. Native Americans used prickly pear cactus both for food and medicinal use. The roots were ground for a healing poultice and used to make a diuretic tea.

DESCRIPTION: Prickly pear fruit, filled with small edible seeds, is sometimes called tunas, pears or Indian figs. The fruit is wrapped in firm skin dotted with spines that can get under the skin like fiberglass. Use tongs to collect, clean and cut the fruit. Prickly pear fruit is sweet like watermelon.

NUTRITION: The fruit is low in calories (about 40 for 4 ounces of edible pulp) and high in fiber, vitamin C and potassium. It is low in sodium.

EQUIVALENTS: One to two prickly pear fruits equal one serving. Four large fruits weigh about one pound.

TO BUY: Choose prickly pear fruits that are full and deeply colored, with tender, uncrinkled skin. A fruit should be a uniform egg shape with few blemishes and no soft spots. It should be firm, but not rock-hard, with bright skin.

TO STORE: If firm, ripen fruit at room temperature a few days. Refrigerate when tender up to five days. Freeze juice up to one year.

TO PREPARE: For fruits that are to be sliced or puréed, cover with boiling water one minute, then drain. To peel, hold the fruit with a fork and slice 1/2 inch off both ends. Cut a lengthwise slit one-fourth inch deep. Slip the tip of a knife under the skin and thick under-layer, then pull away both layers.

TO USE: Serve whole,

See **PRICKLY** on **PAGE D2**



CARLOS CHAVEZ / LOS ANGELES TIMES

Easy-to-make Goat Cheese-Chive Quenelles add a creamy tang to Cold Avocado Bisque.

Flavorful avocados are more than guacamole

from PAGE D1

GRILLED CORN AND AVOCADO SALAD WITH LIME-CUMIN VINAIGRETTE

Total time: 20 minutes
Serves: 6
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon puréed garlic
2 teaspoons salt
6 tablespoons lime juice (preferably from small, sweet Mexican limes)
1/4 cup oil
2 pounds (about 3 large) avocados, pitted
2 ears of corn, grilled and husked
1/4 pound radishes (about 12 medium)
1/4 cup diced red onion
Prepare the dressing by whisking together the cumin-garlic-salt mixture and lime

juice in a small bowl. Slowly add the oil, whisking constantly.

Prepare the salad by thinly slicing the pitted avocados, then carefully peeling away the skin from each slice. Put the avocado slices in a mixing bowl, pour 2 tablespoons of dressing over the top and stir gently to coat. Remove the avocado, draining the excess dressing back into the mixing bowl, and arrange the slices on a serving platter.

Using a large, sharp knife, cut the kernels away from the corn into the mixing bowl.

Quarter the radishes lengthwise. If they are large, cut them in half widthwise. Add the radishes and onion to the corn in the bowl along with the remaining dressing and stir to coat well.

Using a slotted spoon,

remove the vegetables from the dressing, draining the excess dressing back into the mixing bowl. Mound the vegetables on top of the avocados. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: 295 calories; 3 grams protein; 16 grams carbohydrates; 7 grams fiber; 27 grams fat; 4 grams saturated fat; 0 cholesterol; 793 mg. sodium.

CARNE ASADA SANDWICHES WITH AVOCADOS AND CHIPOTLE MAYONNAISE

Total time: 30 minutes, plus 30 minutes marinating time
Serves: 6

1 small red onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
3 cloves garlic
2 teaspoons salt, divided

2 tablespoons lime juice, divided
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 pounds round steak (1/4 to 1/2-inch thick)
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon puréed canned chipotle en adobo, with sauce
2 avocados, halved and pitted
6 bolillo rolls, focaccia rolls or other high-quality buns

Rinse the sliced red onion in a strainer under cold running water. Pat it dry, place it in a bowl and cover it with the red wine vinegar. Set aside for at least 30 minutes, as much as 2 hours.

Using a mortar and pestle, pound the garlic with the salt to make a paste. Add 1 tablespoon of lime juice and incorporate it into the garlic. Slowly add the olive oil, stirring with the pestle to incorporate it too.

If you don't have a mortar and pestle, this can be done in a food processor.

Spoon the garlic mixture over the steak, spreading it with the back of a spoon. Season well with salt. Turn the meat over and do the same with the other side.

In another small bowl, use a spoon to beat together the mayonnaise, puréed chipotle and 1 tablespoon of the lime juice.

Cut the pitted avocados into thin slices and carefully peel away the skin.

Grill the beef over high heat. If you're using round steak, cook about 3 minutes on the first side, then turn and cook 1 or 2 minutes more. The meat should be medium rare in the center. If you're using a thicker cut, leave the meat rarer in the center, cooking 6 or 7 minutes per side. Set the meat aside

while you build the sandwiches.

Cut the rolls in half and spread with the chipotle mayonnaise, about 1 tablespoon for each half. Arrange the avocado slices on the top half of the roll, then add a couple of onion rings.

If you're using round steak, cut the meat into pieces roughly the size of the bread and arrange on top of the onion rings. If you're using a thicker cut, slice it thinly across the grain and then arrange it on the sandwich. Add the bottom half of the roll and press gently to compact everything together. Turn the sandwich right-side-up to serve.

PER SERVING: 650 calories; 47 grams protein; 36 grams carbohydrates; 3 grams fiber; 35 grams fat; 7 grams saturated fat; 113 mg. cholesterol; 869 mg. sodium.

a RARE treat

CEVICHE FOR KINGS

4 servings
8 medium shelled, deveined shrimp, cut in half
6 ounces farm-raised catfish or firm fresh fish cut into 1/2-inch chunks
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon peeled minced ginger
2 lemons
2 limes
3/4 cup Mumm Champagne
Cordon Rouge for recipe; 1 glass for the chef
1 small shallot
8 mussels
8 oysters
8 clams
2 ears corn shucked
1 bunch cilantro, leaves only, chopped
1/2 cup minced red onion
1 tablespoon minced celery
3/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
Generous splash hot sauce

Inside a salad bowl, combine shrimp, fish, ginger, garlic. Add juice of 1 lemon and 1 lime. Toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, or for as long as 3.

Meanwhile, inside a large pot, bring champagne with diced shallot to a boil. Add clean mussels, oysters and clams; cover and steam until open, about 3 minutes. Remove from liquid. Continue to simmer liquid until it is reduced by half. Reserve for use during final preparations.

Remove all seafood from shells and refrigerate. (This step can be done a day in advance.)

Bring another pot of salted water to a boil, add corn and boil for 6 minutes. Cool inside a bowl of cold water. Pat dry. Using a large knife, cut ker-



CHRISTOPHER ALUKA/KNIGHT RIDDER

Experiment with combinations of fish and herbs, but use the freshest ones possible.

nels from cob. Discard cobs and refrigerate kernels.

Drain excess liquid from shrimp and catfish and transfer to large bowl. Add corn, mussels, clams, oysters, and combine with champagne reduction, cilantro, onion and celery. Add juices of remaining lime and lemon, seasoned salt and hot sauce, to taste.

Divide among 4 extra-large martini glasses. Must be served cold, immediately. Do not allow to sit or to come to room temperature.

As prepared by Francois Fissera of Fleur de Lys Cooking School, Colombia, for Lord Bacardi of Monte Carlo.

PERUVIAN CEVICHE

6 to 8 servings
1 pound fresh fish fillet (such as red snapper, cod, halibut, flounder, bass, grouper, salmon or bay scallops) (see note)
1 pound small bay shrimp, deveined, peeled and cooked
1 lemon, juiced

4 to 5 limes, juiced
3 tablespoons green onions, minced
2 to 3 fresh tomatoes, minced
1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves, minced (or to taste)
Celery, minced (use the tender inner stalks only)
Black olives
1 cup prepared good-quality tomato salsa (mild to medium)

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Celery salt to taste

1 large can tomato juice
Cilantro sprigs
Tortilla chips

Note: Use only fresh top-quality fish and seafood (buy sushi grade whenever possible). Texture is imperative to the dish and only fresh, not previously frozen, seafood should be used.

Lay fish out and run hands over top, pressing slightly to look for any remaining bones. Cut fish in 3/4-inch strips and then cut into 1/2-inch pieces.

Using a gallon jug, add fish and shrimp; add lemon and lime juice to jug (juice should just cover seafood in jug). Cover with lid and shake.

Refrigerate overnight or a minimum of 12 hours, shaking occasionally.

After seafood mixture has marinated, add green onions, tomatoes, cilantro, celery, olives, salsa, pepper, celery salt and tomato juice to jug. (Depending on how much of ingredients are used, may not need all the tomato juice.)

Shake and then refrigerate until ready to serve.

To serve, place mixture (with juice) in serving bowls (martini glasses, sundae glasses) and garnish with cilantro sprigs and tortilla chips.

Ceviche does not keep well. It becomes rubbery and tastes "overcooked" when it sits for more than 24 hours.

From Leo Porter, manager of the Horseshoe Ranch in Fort Kalamath, Ore., as printed in "I'll Have What They're Having" (Three Forks, 2002)

RED SNAPPER CEVICHE

4-6 servings
1 pound fresh red snapper fillets

Juice of 3 lemons

Juice of 3 limes

1 onion, thinly sliced

Salt and pepper

Pinch of cayenne pepper

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 chile, finely chopped

2 tablespoons freshly chopped cilantro

Wash the fillets under cold running water and pat dry on kitchen paper.

Cut fish into bite-sized

pieces and place in a shallow dish together with the remaining ingredients.

Mix to coat well and refrigerate for 4-6 hours before serving, turning once or twice.

TOMATO-BASED SHRIMP CEVICHE

4 servings
1 pound shrimp, peeled and cleaned

1 large tomato, roasted, peeled and seeded

2 jalapeño peppers, roasted, peeled and seeded

2 red peppers, roasted, peeled seeded

1/2 medium onion, roasted

3/4 cup fresh lime juice

1/2 cup fresh orange juice

1/4 tomato juice

Tabasco

1 small tablespoon sugar

Salt

For garnish:

1 small whole red onion

sliced thin

2 tablespoons chives, chopped

2 tablespoons scallions, chopped

Several whole leaves cilantro

1 large tomato chopped

Place cleaned shrimp into a pot of boiling water for about 2 minutes (no longer), then remove to an ice bath.

Place all other ingredients in the blender and liquefy. Pour the shrimp over mix and chill.

Combine all garnish ingredients and toss with shrimp ceviche before serving.

In Ecuador, where this recipe originated, the dish is served with popcorn.

From Doug Rodriguez's Ecuadorian Shrimp Ceviche on StarChefs; www.starchefs.com

Prickly pear's tang is tender

from PAGE D1

peeled fruit or purée, or preserve by pickling.

To serve fresh, chill cubed or thinly sliced peeled fruit and use in fruit cups or fruit salads. Combine slices of peeled fruits with paper-thin slices of jicama and drizzle with orange juice.

Deep-pink prickly pear jelly is a popular item to include in holiday gift baskets. Call 243-1386 in Albuquerque and request "Cactus Concoctions" if you would like recipes.

PRICKLY COBBLER

DOUGH:
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Pinch salt
1/4 cup cold butter
5 tablespoons milk
FILLING:

4 cups prickly pear cactus fruit, peeled, seeded, coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

1 tablespoon tapioca

SAUCE:

1/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 tablespoons instant lemonade granules

1 cup water

To prepare dough, in a large bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in butter until mixture is consistency of corn meal. Add milk and mix until dough forms. Turn onto a floured surface and roll in a large circle. Cut in 4 wedges.

To prepare filling, spread chopped fruit over pastry wedges. Sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg and tapioca. Roll up and place in a medium-size baking dish.

To prepare sauce, in a small pan, combine butter, sugar and vanilla. Dissolve lemonade granules in water and stir into butter mixture. Heat sauce until butter melts and sugar is dissolved. Pour over cobbler. Bake in preheated oven 350 degree oven one hour or until crust is brown. Makes 4 servings.

Designer oils offer a more healthful option

from PAGE D1

attributes that alter the way the body digests them.

Another category of designer oils sure to gain momentum will be oils that do not form trans fats during processing. Trans fats are a type of hydrogenated fat that raise heart disease risk by increasing levels of blood cholesterol. A recent FDA ruling requires trans fat to be listed on a product's Nutrition Facts label by 2006.

Among the new oils is Enova, introduced in Japan a few years ago, but not released until recently in some U.S. markets. It has been formulated so that more of the fat burns off as energy.

The new Mazola Vegetable Oil has twice the vitamin E of other vegetable oils. A one-tablespoon serving now meets 30 percent of an adult's daily need. Vitamin E is an antioxidant that may help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer. It is present naturally in vegetable oil, but the level is reduced in processing of vegetable oil. Mazola's processing adds it back in.

Although not cooking oils, other designer fats are worth mentioning: Take Control and Benecol. Available as spreads, these products contain plant sterols derived from soybeans and other sources that have been shown to lower the "bad" LDL cholesterol when they are

used in place of other spreads.

Another spread making its way into supermarkets in the U.S. is Olivio. This is the first spread made from olive oil and has 85 percent less saturated fat than butter, is cholesterol free and higher in monounsaturated fats than other spreads. Olivio is just entering the retail market.

An oil that helps people lose weight and lower cholesterol levels may join the ranks of designer oils in the United States. Developed by a Canadian biotechnology company, this oil (called Vivola) is not yet on store shelves; it's formulated with medium-chain triglycerides (MCT), plant phytochemicals, and omega-3 and omega-6 fats. The MCTs are burned as energy more readily than traditional fats and the phytochemicals help block the absorption of cholesterol.

Another oil, Soyola, derived from a new soybean variety, does not require hydrogenation to improve its usefulness for cooking, extend its shelf life or harden it for baked goods and margarine. Hydrogenation produces the bulk of trans fats in the diet. However, the beans from which it is made have yet to be harvested in the quantities that food manufacturers would require. Soyola is not yet in stores.

The outlook for designer cooking oils is good. When it comes to managing your

weight and controlling levels of blood cholesterol and triglycerides, making a simple switch may give you an edge. As Quagliani points out, this is a case where what you do eat, not what you don't, may make the difference.

Health claims for Enova have been particularly strong. A blend of soy and canola oils, it is currently being sold in

test markets in Chicago and Atlanta by food manufacturer ADM Kao (a joint venture of Archer Daniels Midland Co. of Illinois and the Kao Corp. in Japan). It is also sold online; visit the Web site www.enovaoil.com.

"The structure of Enova causes it to be metabolized and handled differently in the body," said Branin Lane,

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NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

CACTUS CONCOCTIONS



Patricia Aaron, Extension Home Economist
Bernalillo County

PRICKLY PEAR JUICE

To prepare prickly pear cactus juice, singe spines of 20 prickly pear fruit. Clean fruit and brush with a vegetable brush. Wash in running water and place in a large pan with enough water to cover. Boil 20 minutes or until tender. Drain and crush with a potato masher. Line a colander with 2 thickness of muslin. Strain mashed fruit and measure 2-1/2 cups juice.

PRICKLY PEAR JELLY

2-1/2 cups cactus juice
1 package powdered pectin
3 tablespoons lemon juice
3-1/2 cups sugar

Combine juice and pectin in a large pan. Bring to a fast boil, stirring constantly, and add lemon juice and sugar. Bring to a hard boil and boil 3-5 minutes or until jelly sheets from a metal spoon. Remove from heat. Stir and skim off foam. Pour jelly into hot canning jars, leaving 1/4-inch head space. Wipe jar rims and seal. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath. Makes about 6 pints.



CACTUS COOKIES

1/2 cup butter
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup sour cream
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla
1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup prickly pear juice
1/4 cup prickly pear fruit, peeled, seeded, diced
1/4 cup maraschino cherries

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease a baking sheet. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Blend in sour cream, egg and vanilla. In a medium-size bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt; blend into sour cream mixture. Stir in prickly pear juice and fruit and cherries. Drop from a teaspoon onto greased baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven 15 to 18 minutes. Makes 2-1/2 dozen.

CACTUS PICKLE

2 quarts prickly pear fruit
2 cups sugar
2/3 cup white vinegar
3 oz. red cinnamon candies
Whole cloves, if desired

Using gloves, peel prickly pear fruit and cut each fruit in half lengthwise; remove seeds. In a large pan, combine sugar, vinegar, cinnamon candies and cloves, if desired. Cook to a syrup. Add fruit and cook until fruit is transparent. Remove cloves and ladle fruit and syrup into hot canning jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and seal. Process 15 minutes in a boiling water bath. Makes about 4 pints.

PRICKLY PEAR COBBLER

Dough:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Pinch salt
1/4 cup margarine
5 tablespoons milk

Filling:

4 cups prickly pear fruit
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
3 teaspoons tapioca

Sauce:

1/4 cup margarine
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 tablespoons lemonade granules
Water

To prepare dough, in a large bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in margarine until mixture is consistency of corn meal. Add milk and mix until dough forms. Turn onto floured board and roll in a large circle. Cut in 4 pie-shaped wedges.

To prepare filling, peel and seed prickly pear fruit. Spread cut-up fruit over pastry wedges and sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg and tapioca. Roll up and place in a medium-size baking dish.

To prepare sauce, in a small pan, combine margarine, sugar and vanilla. Add lemonade granules with enough water to make 1 cup liquid. Heat sauce until margarine melts and sugar is dissolved. Pour over cobbler. Bake at 350 degrees F 1 hour or until crust is brown. Makes 4 servings.

NOPALITOS

Using tongs, collect new, young, tender pads, 1-to 3-inches in length, in the spring. In a saucepan, cover pads with water. If desired, add 1 large garlic clove, 1 slice of onion and 1 ear of sweet corn for flavoring. Boil 20 minutes and drain. Using a sharp knife, scrape off stickers and rubbery leaves; trim edge of pad about 1/16 inch. Rinse pad well. Be sure all stickers are removed.

Sprinkle chopped nopalitos on a bowl of beans, add to a tossed salad or stir into any casserole.

CACTUS CONDIMENT

1/4 cup chopped green onion
3 tablespoons red chile paste
Vegetable oil
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup nopalitos

In a skillet, saute onion in oil until transparent. Add nopalitos and saute about 1 minute. Add red chile paste and water; simmer until nopalitos are well-saturated with sauce. Use as a sauce for meat. Makes about 1 cup.



BHHC-7-2-20 Prickly Pear

